

## **Exemplar-based Communication Plan and Draft Document**

### **Communication Plan**

In Spring 2007, the California Department of Education (CDE) and State Board of Education Staff (SBE) staff and Board representatives engaged California's statewide testing contractor in an effort to select exemplar items as a means to further communicate to parents, stakeholders and the general public about the differentiation among performance levels. This effort to select exemplar items and produce a final exemplar-based communication document is currently in process. Attached to this submission for the federal peer review is a rough draft of the exemplar-based communication document. The draft exemplar-based communication document will be reviewed by the state's Assessment Review Panels which consist of diverse panels of educators from across California, covering all grade levels and content areas. Once reviewed by these panels, the exemplar-based communication document will be made available for review by stakeholders and the general public prior to final consideration by the SBE.



## **Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program**

Background and Sample Test Questions for  
the California Standards Tests (CSTs)



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## Questions that Provide Answers

Every spring, California students take tests that are designed to measure how they are doing and how their schools are doing.

The questions provide answers for a number of audiences. These tests, formally called the Standardized Testing and Reporting Program or STAR, provide everyone with important information on how our education system is doing. Teachers, state and district officials, and the public learn how well schools are doing in helping students reach those standards. Individual students and their parents receive one snapshot of how well they're doing compared with the state's expectations or academic standards.

The test questions are carefully designed to measure how a student is doing in mathematics, literacy, science and history-social science. The tests, of course, are confidential, but each year the state releases many of the questions from past tests to the public.

These “released” questions can help take the mystery out of the state tests. Teachers, parents, students and taxpayers have access to dozens of questions at every grade level to help them better understand what students are expected to learn and how they are asked to demonstrate what they know on the STAR tests.

This is a sample, just a few questions in mathematics and English-language arts that have been asked of third-grade students.

These are real test questions. Each comes with three important pieces of information: the correct answer, the percentage of students who answered the question correctly and the state academic standard it covers.

More test questions at this grade or any other grade are available on the Internet at **[www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/css05rtq.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/css05rtq.asp)**, where you can get even more information about each question and how students did answering it.

To find out what California students are expected to know at each grade — the academic content standards — please go to **[www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/)**.

## STAR Program Components

First authorized in 1997 and reauthorized in 2004 by state law, the STAR Program includes six test components:

- The **California Standards Tests (CSTs)** were developed for California public schools and are aligned to the state content standards.
- The **California Modified Assessment (CMA)** is a grade-level assessment for students who have an individualized education program (IEP) plan and will not achieve grade-level proficiency within the year covered by the student's IEP plan. The CMA measures achievement of state content standards in English-language arts, math and science.
- The **California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)** was developed for California public school students who have significant cognitive disabilities and cannot take the CSTs and CAT/6 Survey (for Grades 3 and 7) even with accommodations or modifications.
- The **California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition (CAT/6 Survey)**, administered in Grades 3 and 7 only, are nationally norm-referenced tests that measure the achievement of general academic knowledge and provide national comparisons.
- The **Apr enda, La prueba de logros en español, Tercera edición (Apr enda 3)**, is a nationally norm-referenced achievement test of general academic knowledge in Spanish for Spanish-speaking English learners (for grades five through eleven in 2007).
- The **Standards-based Tests in Spanish (STS)** have been developed for Spanish-speaking English learners and measure the achievement of state content standards in reading-language arts and mathematics in Spanish (for grades two, three and four in 2007). As each grade level is developed, it will replace the Apr enda.

## Reasons for Testing

The test components that make up the STAR Program provide results that can be used for different purposes. Test results:

- provide parents and guardians with one piece of information about their children's performance, which should be used with all other information on that subject to help inform parents about student mastery of the subject matter.



- become a tool that helps parents, guardians and teachers work together to improve student learning.
- help school districts and schools identify strengths and areas that need improvement in their educational programs.
- allow the public and policymakers to hold public schools accountable for student learning.
- provide state and federal policymakers with information to help make program decisions and allocate resources.

## STAR Participants

It's important that all students take part in the STAR Program. Participation by all students gives schools, districts and the public a clearer picture of student achievement. Additionally, each school must have at least 95 percent of its students participate in statewide assessments in order to meet federal accountability requirements.

All students in Grades 2 through 11 in California public schools participate in the STAR Program, including students who are English learners and students with disabilities.

In addition to the tests in English, all Spanish-speaking English learners who have been enrolled in a school in the United States for less than 12 months or who primarily receive instruction in Spanish, regardless of how long they have been in school in the United States, must take the designated primary language test (DPLT), currently either the STS or the Aprenda 3.

Most students with disabilities take the tests in the STAR Program with all other students under standard conditions. Testing students with disabilities helps ensure that these students are getting the educational services they need to succeed. Some students with disabilities may require testing variations, accommodations and/or modifications to be able to take tests. These are listed in the *Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications for Administration of California Statewide Assessments*, which is available on the California Department of Education (CDE) website at [www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/).



# Grade 3: English-Language Arts

## Question 1 (Proficient Sample)

Which word has the same vowel sound as the underlined part of crayon?

- A table
- B wrapped
- C wax
- D back

**Correct answer: A**

Approximately 50% of students were able to answer this test question correctly.



### Strand – Word Analysis, Fluency and Systematic Vocabulary Development:

Students understand the basic features of reading. They select letter patterns and know how to translate them into spoken language by using phonics, syllabication and word parts. They apply this knowledge to achieve fluent oral and silent reading.

### Standard 1.1 – Decoding and Word Recognition:

Know and use complex word families when reading (e.g., -ight) to decode unfamiliar words.

# Grade 3: English-Language Arts

## Question 2 (Proficient Sample)

Eric's teacher asked the students to write a paragraph about starfish. Here is the first draft of Eric's paragraph. It may contain errors.

### Starfish

After visiting the beach, I wanted to learn about starfish. Of course, starfish aren't really stars. This name comes from their shape. They're not fish either, though they start their lives in water pools by the seashore. They can take care of themselves even when they are young. Young starfish know what to eat. Some starfish can later live deep in the sea, though they can't swim. They move by using their legs and tube feet. Large starfish also use their tube feet to grab and pull open the shells of clams and other sea animals. A starfish has no head or tail, just its five legs. If a leg falls off, it grows right back. The amazing starfish has become my favorite animal.

**Eric wants to learn more about different kinds of starfish. He would find MOST of his information**

- A in a telephone book under "starfish."
- B in the dictionary under "starfish."
- C under the heading "starfish" in an encyclopedia article.
- D under the word "starfish" in a reference book about word choices.

### Correct answer: C

Approximately 51% of students were able to answer this test question correctly.

#### Strand – Writing Strategies:

Students write clear and coherent sentences and paragraphs that develop a central idea. Their writing shows they consider the audience and purpose. Students progress through the stages of the writing process (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing successive versions).

#### Standard 1.3 – Research & Technology:

Understand the structure and organization of various reference materials (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, atlas, encyclopedia).



# Grade 3: English-Language Arts

## Question 3 (Advanced Sample)

Read this sentence.

My school is in Vista California so our trip took an hour.

What is the correct way to punctuate the underlined part of this sentence?

- A My school is in Vista California,
- B My school is in Vista, California,
- C My school is in, Vista, California
- D Leave as is.

**Correct answer: B**

Approximately 35% of students were able to answer this test question correctly.

### Strand – Written and Oral English Language Conventions:

Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions appropriate to this grade level.

### Standard 1.5 – Punctuation:

Punctuate dates, city and state, and titles of books correctly.

# Grade 3: English-Language Arts

## Question 4 (Basic Sample)

### Frog and Coyote's Race

A Native-American Tale

One afternoon, Coyote went hunting. He caught a mouse, and later, a squirrel. As a fat rabbit hopped by, Coyote grabbed him too and started home to cook his supper.

Suddenly, a large frog landed in front of him. Coyote pounced and pinned Frog to the ground.

Frog thought quickly and came up with a plan. "Brother Coyote," he called. "You must not eat me today!"

Coyote laughed loudly, "Why shouldn't I help myself to such a tasty morsel?"

"Why, I have a bet to make with you," Frog stated. "Tomorrow there is to be a race." Coyote's ears twitched. "A race?"

"Yes," Frog continued. "You and I will race. If you win, then you may eat me."

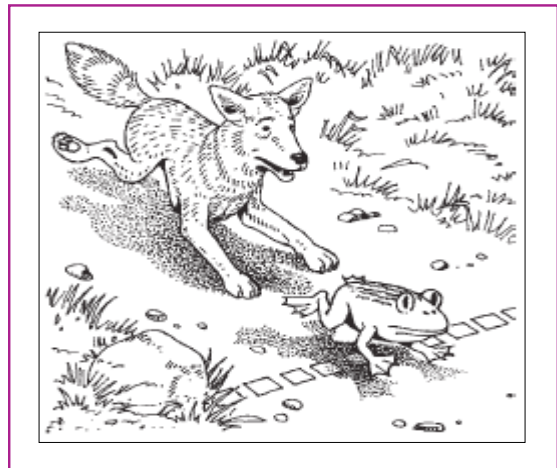
Coyote was never able to pass up dares, refuse bets, or miss a race. He agreed and loped away swiftly to enjoy his dinner. Frog hurried to the lake.

There he told his friends of his bet with Coyote. They laughed, knowing one little frog could never win against such a large, strong coyote. Frog hushed them and explained his clever plan. With some help, it was certain that Coyote would lose.

In the morning, the animals gathered to watch as Coyote and Frog agreed on the course they would run. They were to start at the large stone and circle all the way around the lake. The first one back to the stone would be the winner. When the sun reached the noonday mark, they were off. Coyote sprinted as quickly as he could. Frog bounded into the grass and waited. Coyote looked behind him. Seeing no sign of Frog, Coyote was sure he would win. As Coyote was beginning to tire, Frog's look-alike buddy jumped onto the course from behind an alder tree ahead. Coyote was surprised to see what he thought was Frog, and ran even faster, determined to win. Coyote dashed past him and called, "You may be fast, but I'm faster. I'll wait at the finish line to eat you up, Frog!"

When Coyote came in sight of the finish line, Frog had emerged from his hiding place and easily hopped across the line. "You may be fast, Coyote, but I've managed to beat you!" Frog joyfully called out. Silently, he added, "With the help of my friends."

Coyote went home puzzled and hungry again.



# Grade 3: English-Language Arts

How does Frog solve his problem in this passage?

- A He hides.
- B He runs away.
- C He outsmarts Coyote.
- D He becomes friends with Coyote.

**Correct answer: C**

Approximately 65% of students were able to answer this test question correctly.



## Strand – Reading Comprehension:

Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They draw upon a variety of comprehension strategies as needed (e.g., generating and responding to essential questions, making predictions, comparing information from several sources). The selections in *Recommended Readings in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students. In addition to their regular school reading, by Grade 4, students read one-half million words annually, including a good representation of grade-level-appropriate narrative and expository text (e.g., classic and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, online information). In Grade 3, students make substantial progress toward this goal.

## Standard 2.6 – Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text:

Extract appropriate and significant information from the text, including problems and solutions.

# Grade 3: English-Language Arts

## Question 5 (Below Basic Sample)

### Monkey Looks for Trouble

One fine day in Trinidad, an island in the West Indies, a woman walked along the road. From high in his treetop, Monkey watched her. He saw the large clay pot she was carrying. How alarmed he was when she tripped over a stone and dropped the pot! It broke into many pieces. It had been full of fluffy white cakes that scattered on the road.

"Oh, boy, have I ever got trouble now! I have so much trouble!" exclaimed the lady. She tried to gather the cakes in her colorful skirts, but they kept spilling out. Soon she gave up and left.

Monkey scurried down the tree trunk to the ground. "These are trouble?" he muttered to himself. "I will taste this trouble, for it looks quite delicious." The cakes were coconut cakes, and they were indeed delicious. Monkey ate every one of them.

"I must find more trouble! I must find more trouble!" said Monkey. Off to the market he went, skittering down the road on his quick little feet.

Monkey went to a man standing at a market stall and asked, "Please, kind sir, may I have some trouble?"

"You're looking for trouble?" said the man. Monkey nodded his head in an excited way. The man chuckled and went into a building. He came out with a bag and handed it to Monkey. "Here you go," he said.

Monkey had trouble carrying the bag of trouble. It was so large and lumpy, and it was moving! He was so happy to have more trouble, though, that he didn't worry. He went down the road to a quiet spot and opened the bag, ready for a feast of trouble.

Out of the bag came three fierce little dogs! They barked and snapped and snarled at Monkey. Shaking with fear, Monkey climbed the nearest tree. How hungry he was! He took a fruit and plopped it into his mouth. Little did he know that the tree was a chili pepper tree. Suddenly his mouth felt full of fiery flames!



## Grade 3: English-Language Arts

Monkey needed water! Below, though, those three fierce beasts were snapping and yapping at him. He had to wait until they grew bored and went away. Then Monkey quickly returned to the ground and ran, lickety-split, to a stream. He drank lots of cool water. After a while his burnt mouth felt better.

Monkey returned to his own quiet treetop and never looked for trouble again.

Which saying **BEST** tells what Monkey learned in this story?

- A You cannot please everyone.
- B Be careful what you ask for.
- C Slow and steady wins the race.
- D Do not judge a book by its cover.

**Correct answer: B**

Approximately 80% of students were able to answer this test question correctly.

### Strand – Literary Response and Analysis:

Students read and respond to a wide variety of significant works of children's literature. They distinguish between the structural features of text and the literary terms or elements (e.g., theme, plot, setting, characters). The selections in *Recommended Readings in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students.

### Standard 3.4 – Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text:

Determine the underlying theme or author's message in fictional and nonfiction text.

# Grade 3: Mathematics

## Question 1 (Proficient Sample)

A pie was divided into fifths. Emily ate  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the pie. Tony ate  $\frac{2}{5}$  of the pie. Jenny ate  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the pie. How much of the pie was left?

- A  $\frac{4}{5}$
- B  $\frac{3}{5}$
- C  $\frac{2}{5}$
- D  $\frac{1}{5}$

**Correct answer: D**

Approximately 58% of students were able to answer this test question correctly.

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## Strand – Number Sense

### Standard Set 3.0

Students understand the relationship between whole numbers, simple fractions and decimals.

### Standard 3.2

Add and subtract simple fractions (e.g., determine that  $\frac{1}{8} + \frac{3}{8}$  is the same as  $\frac{1}{2}$ ).



# Grade 3: Mathematics

## Question 2 (Proficient Sample)

Reggie compared the prices of two radios. The table below shows the prices.

Cost of Radios

Brand	Cost
A	\$31.47
B	\$34.71

How much more does Brand B cost than Brand A?

- A \$3.24
- B \$3.26
- C \$3.34
- D \$3.36

**Correct answer: A**

Approximately 53% of students were able to answer this test question correctly.

### Strand – Number Sense

#### Standard Set 3.0

Students understand the relationship between whole numbers, simple fractions and decimals.

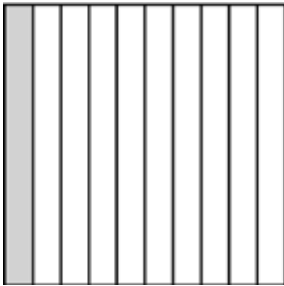
#### Standard 3.3

Solve problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of money amounts in decimal notation, and multiply and divide money amounts in decimal notation by using whole-number multipliers and divisors.

# Grade 3: Mathematics

## Question 3 (Advanced Sample)

Donna shaded  $\frac{1}{10}$  of the figure.



Which decimal equals  $\frac{1}{10}$  ?

- A 0.01
- B 0.1
- C 0.110
- D 1.0

**Correct answer: B**

Approximately 40% of students were able to answer this test question correctly.

### Strand – Number Sense

#### Standard Set 3.0

Students understand the relationship between whole numbers, simple fractions and decimals.

#### Standard 3.4

Know and understand that fractions and decimals are two different representations of the same concept (e.g., 50 cents is  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a dollar, 75 cents is  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a dollar).

# Grade 3: Mathematics

## Question 4 (Basic Sample)

How is eight thousand, seventy-six written in standard form?

- A 8067
- B 8076
- C 8706
- D 8760

**Correct answer: B**

Approximately 77% of students were able to answer this test question correctly.

### Strand – Number Sense

#### Standard Set 1.0

Students understand the place value of whole numbers.

#### Standard 1.1

Count, read and write whole numbers to 10,000.

# Grade 3: Mathematics

## Question 5 (Below Basic Sample)

What number can be multiplied by 5768 to give the answer 5768?

$$5768 \times \square = 5768$$

- A 0
- B 1
- C 2
- D 10

**Correct answer: B**

Approximately 87% of students were able to answer this test question correctly.

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### Strand – Number Sense

#### Standard Set 2.0

Students calculate and solve problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

#### Standard 2.6

Understand the special properties of 0 and 1 in multiplication and division.

